



Department of Justice

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FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTS FIREMAN FOR PRODUCTION AND POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

(BROWNSVILLE, TX) A federal grand jury has handed down an indictment charging John Craig Zimmerman, 50, of Los Fresnos, TX with four counts of possession and production of child pornography, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today.

The indictment, returned on Tuesday, April 3, 2007, charges Zimmerman with two counts of producing child pornography by using or enticing a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct. If convicted, Zimmerman faces at least ten years and up to twenty years imprisonment for each count of production of child pornography. The indictment also charges Zimmerman with one count of receipt of child pornography via the internet and one count of possession of child pornography. Receiving child pornography carries a punishment, upon conviction, of at least five years with up to twenty years imprisonment. The possession of child pornography charge carries a punishment of up to ten years imprisonment. Each of the four counts also carry a maximum fine of \$250,000. Zimmerman will next be in court on Thursday for a detention hearing.

According to allegations of a criminal complaint filed earlier this week, the investigation leading to the charges began with an anonymous tip that Zimmerman had images of child pornography on his work and home computers. The Brownsville Fire Department, where Zimmerman works, allowed Brownsville Police investigators access to the computer Zimmerman used. After finding a number of images containing child pornography, BPD investigators contacted Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for assistance. A federal search warrant of Zimmerman's house on FM 1575 in Los Fresnos, uncovered DVDs and computer disks containing additional images of child pornography.

Two of the minor children allegedly photographed by Zimmerman and depicted in pornographic images have been located by BPD and ICE investigators.

This case was investigated by the Brownsville Police Department, and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and originally charged by the Cameron County District Attorney's Office. This case will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terra Bay.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project

Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims.

For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit

www.projectsafecchildhood.gov/."

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